

JOSEPH SLOPER AND THE BRITISH CENSUS **(and an Australian connection)**

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In Bulletin 295 (page 6), I gave details of the 1881 British Census entries for a Joseph Sloper and 3) "young" children, Kate, Percy and Eustace, living at 41 St Julian's Road, Willesden, North London, and Sarah Sloper and daughter Ellen living at Kensington, West London. Despite ages which were 20-30 years different to what would be expected from Joseph's death notice in *The Times*, and the children's birth registrations in the St Catherine's House BD&M indexes, I felt sure that this was Joseph Sloper of perfin fame.

Now a recent email has been received from Dave Hill, who has recalled that among the Post Office archive records he sighted, he found a letter from Joseph Sloper written in 1878 from his home in St Julian's Road, London NW. It justifies my earlier confidence about this Joseph Sloper in the 1881 Census, but only reinforces the question of why the ages of Joseph and the children were so much in error - obviously the census-taker did not sight any of these four people in noting the details on the census page!

I had also been curious as to why Joseph's widow Sarah's obituary in *The Times* asked that it be copied by Indian and Colonial papers". Could it be that she had relatives around the Empire?

Sarah's entry in the 1881 British Census states that she was born in Stoke Newington (North London) in about 1815 as she was shown as 65 years old at the census and 76 years old when she died in May 1892. The St Catherine's House indexes show that Sarah Lavell Leete married Joseph Sloper in St Pancras registration district in the second quarter of 1838. Their marriage certificate shows their fathers as Isaac Sloper and Charles Leete, both deceased. In the International Genealogical Index (IGI), there are three other Leete children christened at Stoke Newington (St Mary's Church) - Charles James in 1808, Mary Susanna in 1810, and William Henry in 1811. Their parents are shown as Charles and Mary Leete. Charles Leete and Mary Lavell were married in St Mary's, Marylebone, on 8 January 1807. Charles Leete may have been the chemist in Mile End

Road in the 1833 and 1834 London Directories. Neither of Sarah's brothers, Charles and William, are shown in the 1881 or 1901 British Censuses. Maybe, it was they who had gone to India and the Colonies by the time of Sarah's death.

There is another relevant curiosity in the 1881 Census. At 39 St Julian's Road, Willesden, was Mary Leete (70 years old and unmarried) and her unmarried brother Richard (63 years old) - next door to Joseph Sloper. At first sight, one might think that this Mary was Sarah's sister, Mary Susanna, born in 1810. However, Mary and Richard were both stated to have been born in Ibstock, Leicestershire, and the IGI has an entry for Richard's christening in that parish on 9 April 1818. The IGI also shows that Mary and Richard had at least three other siblings - Thomas (b. 1809), Frederick (b. 1815) and Charles (b. 1816) all born at Ibstock. Frederick migrated to Victoria, Australia, where he married in 1862, and had 8 children, among whose names are "Troughton" (from Frederick's maternal grandfather) and "Lydiat" (Frederick's mother's maiden name). So here is a "Colonial connection" which supports the thought that Mary Leete at 39 St Julian's Road in 1881 was related to Joseph Sloper's wife Sarah - perhaps a cousin.

Dave's message inspired me to have another look through the available records for Joseph's other children - Horace (b. 1844), Alice (b. 1849), John (b. 1850) and George (b. 1852) - who were not listed with either Joseph or Sarah at the 1881 Census. St Catherine's House death records include entries for John (last quarter of 1851, at Marylebone) and George (second quarter of 1854, also at Marylebone).

A search of the 1881 Census for Horace gave no result. However, an Alice Sloper (born in North London) was shown as the private governess for a Hutchings family living in Old Stratford, Warwickshire. They had two children, Amy aged 5, and William aged 4. Their mother, Mary, had been born in London. The IGI shows that Alice Sloper, daughter of Joseph Sloper and Sarah Lavel(sic) Sloper, was christened in St Matthew's Church, Rugby, Warwickshire, on 1 June 1972 - at the age of 23 years.

After Joseph Sloper's death in June 1890, Kate, Percy, and Eustace went to live with their mother and sister Ellen. At the 1891 Census, widow Sarah and those four children (all unmarried) were living at 38 Lancaster

Road, Bayswater/Kensington. Sarah was described as "living on own means", and both Percy and Eustace as "engineer".

The 1901 Census of England and Wales does not list an Alice Sloper about 50 years old, but she is probably the Alice Knight aged 52 years, born at Marylebone, and living at King's Norton, Worcestershire. An Alice Sloper married Francis Knight (32 at 1901 Census) in King's Norton registration district in the last quarter of 1896. Alice Sloper may well have been governess to the Knight family after she left the employ of the Hutchings family. At the 1881 Census, the Knight family was living at Atherstone, Warwickshire, where Francis's father (Waiter) was a bank agent. The death notice for Eustace Sloper in *The Times* of September 8, 1903, said he had died 2 days before at Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, and was formerly of 9 Colville Mansions (this part of Powis Terrace, Kensington, West London). The 1904 Worcestershire Directory for 1904 shows "Francis Knight, Little Intall Fields" listed among the 10 residents of Stoke Prior.

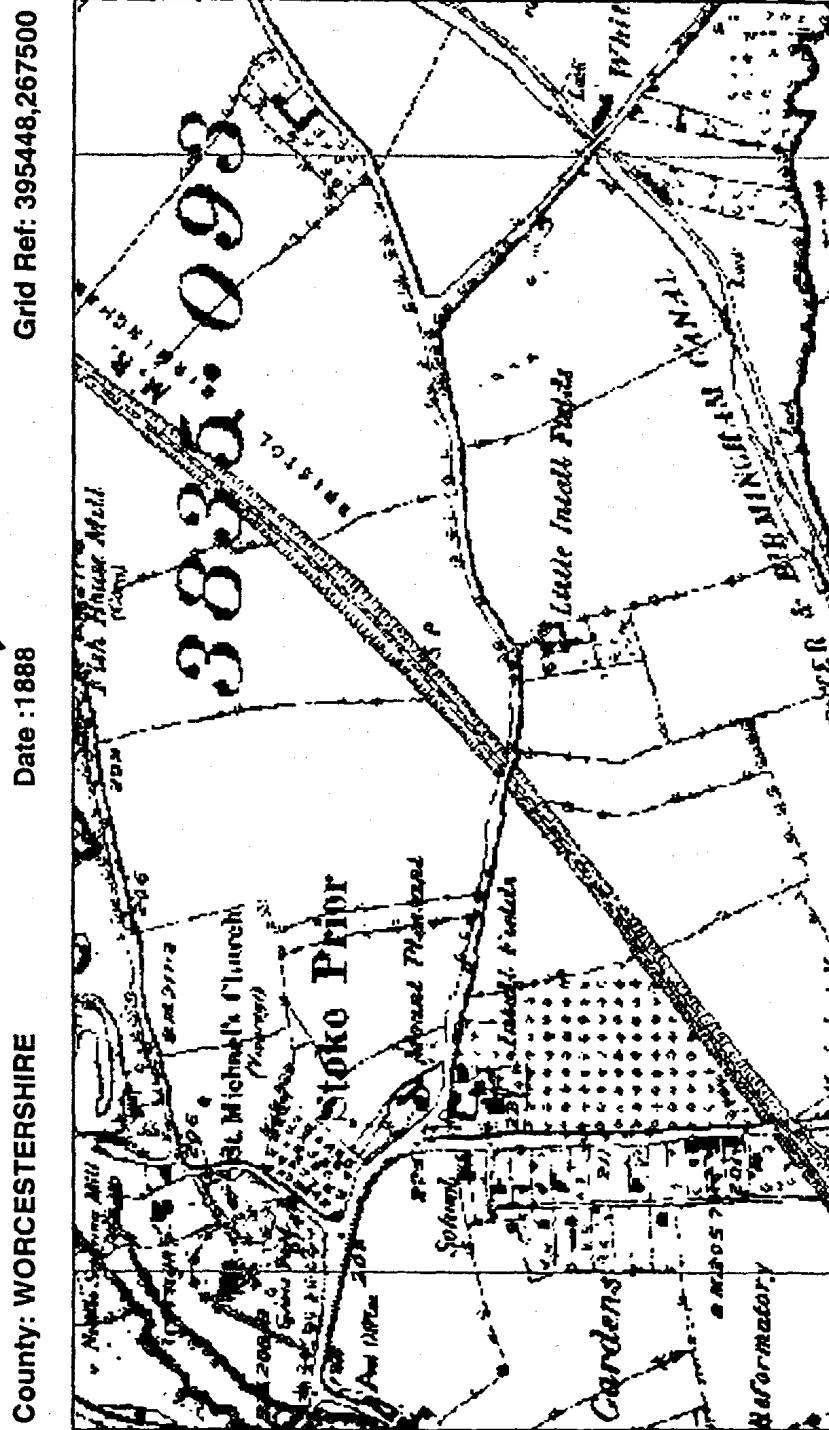
Children Beatrice (b. 1897) and Florence (b. 1900) have names of their father's sisters. Amelia (b. 1902) has her paternal grandmother's name. First-born son Francis Joseph (b. 1901) has his father's name - does he also bear his maternal grandfather's name as his second given name? Amelia died in the second quarter of 1902, aged 1 year, Francis Joseph died in the second quarter of 1903, and their father died in the following quarter. At the 1901 Census, Francis' and Alice's occupations were shown as "living on own means".

In the latter years of their lives, Percy and Eustace lived close to where their mother and sister Ellen were living at the 1881 Census (110 Ledbury Road, Kensington W). Eustace had lived at "9 Colville Mansions", which were in Powis Terrace, until at least the 1901 Census before going to Stoke Prior. Percy died at 29 Chepstow Villas. These locations are indicated on the accompanying map.

The Sloper family are extremely hard to trace on the International Genealogical Index. Alice's christening in 1872 at the age of 23 years perhaps indicates that the family were of a religious group which did not believe in christening. The following are children of Isaac Sloper whose births are recorded in the Particular Baptist Church, Devizes, Wilts.: John (b. 11 Aug 1804), James (b. 21 Nov 1805), Elizabeth (b. 5 Feb 1808),

Hannah (b. 5 Jul 1809), Isaac (b. 18 Feb 1811), Thomas (b. 19 Jul 1815). The "gap" in 1812/13 would match Joseph Sloper's age of 77 years at his death in 1890, but on the other hand, "Sloper" was a frequently-occurring name in Wiltshire.

**1888 map showing the location of Little Intall Fields
in relation to Stoke Prior.**



Map of part of Kensington, West London, showing locations where members of Joseph Sloper's family lived

